Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada

2017–18

Departmental Plan

The Honourable Scott Brison
President of the Treasury Board

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represented by the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada, 2017

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Commissioner's message

Our 2017–18 Departmental Plan provides parliamentarians and Canadians with information on what we do and the results we are trying to achieve during the upcoming year. To improve reporting to Canadians, we are introducing a new, simplified report to replace the Report on Plans and Priorities.

The title of the report has been changed to reflect its purpose: to communicate our annual performance goals and the financial and human resources forecast to deliver those results. The report has also been restructured to tell a clearer, more straightforward and balanced story of the actual results we are trying to achieve, while continuing to provide transparency on how tax payers' dollars will be spent. We describe our programs and services for Canadians, our priorities for 2017–18, and how our work will fulfill our departmental mandate commitments and the government's priorities.

The success of our Office and, indeed, of the larger federal public sector whistleblowing regime that we are an essential part of, depends on people knowing who we are, what we do and how to contact us when they need us. It also requires that people trust us to handle their disclosures of wrongdoing and complaints of reprisal in a fair, neutral and confidential manner.

Our progress towards achieving these goals this past year included some notable achievements: the development of policies and procedures to guide our case analysis and investigations in a consistent, clear and efficient manner, including sharing these publicly; the completion of a research paper on the fear of reprisal; the development of outreach materials to clarify our role and mandate; the completion of a LEAN exercise to assess and improve the efficiency of our case analysis work; and the hiring of skilled employees to address operational needs.

In the coming year, we will build on these achievements, extending our LEAN initiative to our investigations; identifying new areas of policy development to guide our operations and sharing these policies with stakeholders; building our human resources strength on a continuing basis; and reaching out to public servants to help them make informed decisions about coming forward with disclosures and reprisal complaints.

Our core mandate to assess, investigate and report on the disclosures and complaints we receive is what guides the allocation and use of our financial and human resources, and, while that mandate remains constant, we are continually exploring ways to implement it more effectively, to demonstrate success through results and, in doing so, to build confidence in our Office and in the federal public sector.

Joe Friday,
Public Sector Integrity Commissioner

Plans at a glance

The Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's (the Office) Departmental Plan describes our planned results, initiatives and associated resources requirements for a three-year period. The plan also provide several links to additional financial and non-financial information.

The Departmental Plan support the government's commitment to provide simple and transparent reporting to Parliament and to Canadians. This report allow the Office to tell a clear story of what we are aiming to achieve and how dollars are being spent.

The Office is focusing on three specific planned results for 2017-18 which will support a transparent, accountable and responsive federal government.

- An efficient, timely and transparent management of disclosures and reprisal complaints. This result will be achieved mainly by improving timeliness for managing cases through the LEAN review of processes and redesigning the information technology infrastructure and by developing and implementing operational policies, tools and procedures.

- To be known and accessible to public servants and members of the public. This result will be achieved mainly by increasing distribution of information products and by developing and enhancing tools to facilitate access and use of our services.

- A skilled and adaptable team capable of responding to evolving needs. This result will be achieved mainly by investing and supporting leadership competencies for managers and employees through recruitment and training and by fostering a healthy work environment that supports employee engagement.

For more information on the Office's plans, priorities and planned results, see the "Planned results" section of this report.

Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do

Raison d'être

The Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada was established to implement the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act (the Act), which came into force in April 2007.

The Commissioner reports directly to Parliament, and the President of the Treasury Board is responsible for tabling the Office's Departmental Plan and Departmental Results Report in Parliament.

Mandate and role

The Office contributes to strengthening accountability and increases oversight of government operations by providing:

- public servants and members of the public with an independent and confidential process for receiving and investigating disclosures of wrongdoing in, or relating to, the federal public sector, and by reporting founded cases to Parliament and making recommendations to chief executives on corrective measures; and

- public servants and former public servants with a mechanism for handling complaints of reprisal for the purpose of coming to a resolution including referring cases to the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal.

For more general information about the department, see the "Supplementary information" section of this report.

Operating context: conditions affecting our work

The Office is an independent Agent of Parliament and can receive disclosures and complaints from public servants working in federal and Crown corporations, as well as members of the public. The Office is one element of a larger public sector integrity landscape that includes the Treasury Board Secretariat, which has overall responsibility for promoting ethical practices by public servants and disseminating knowledge about the Act. In turn, federal departments and agencies are responsible for administering these ethical practices and are accountable for establishing their own internal disclosure mechanisms in order to provide public servants with an alternative to disclosing wrongdoing to our Office. The Office has the exclusive jurisdiction, however, for responding to complaints of reprisal that result from protected disclosures.

The Office's environment is a complex one that reflects its sensitive mandate. The work requires a high degree of care as each case we handle directly impacts the lives and reputations of individuals and organizations. Despite the existence of formal mechanisms to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoing and to protect against and prevent reprisals, there still exists a culture of resistance to whistleblowing within the federal public service due to various factors, including fear of reprisals. This plays a fundamental role in an individual's decision to disclose wrongdoing. This informs outreach and engagement strategies to increase awareness of the whistleblowing regime, clarify the role of the Office and build trust in the Office.

Media and public interest have demonstrated the need and growing demand to respond to concerns about integrity in both the private and public sectors. Integrity regimes at provincial and municipal levels, as well as in other countries, vary in terms of legislation, mandate, powers, jurisdiction and organizational structures. They provide opportunities for benchmarking and sharing best practices and research.

The Office is working with a multi-stakeholder advisory committee to communicate and engage with external stakeholders on an ongoing and proactive basis and to respond to emerging issues clearly and in a respectful and timely manner.

As a micro-organization, there are challenges with regard to staff retention given limited internal growth opportunities. There are also challenges in sourcing, given that the labour market for key skilled positions, such as investigators, is very competitive.

New technologies are emerging that could better help the Office manage its corporate knowledge as well as its administration, accessibility, case management and performance statistics.

Key risks: things that could affect our ability to achieve our plans and results

Risks can arise from events that the Office cannot influence or by factors outside its control, but the Office must be able to monitor and respond accordingly in order to mitigate the impact, in order to address disclosures of wrongdoing and complaints of reprisal. All of the organizational priorities contribute either directly or indirectly to mitigating the risk of increasing case volumes and/or complexity that may in turn impact the timeliness of completing case files. In particular, a disclosure and reprisal management function that is timely, rigorous, independent and accessible supports effective and efficient use of resources and case file decisions which are clear and complete, minimizing the need for further allocations of resources.

Key risks

Risks	Risk response strategy	Link to the department's Program	Link to government-wide priorities
Increasing of case volume: The Office's ability to respond in a timely manner can be affected by increases in case volume or complexity.	Continue to carry out a LEAN review of processes, report on compliance with service standards and ensure management is informed and that actions are taken as appropriate.	Disclosure and Reprisal Management Program	A transparent, accountable and responsive federal government
Breaches of secured information: This is critical in the context of disclosures, investigations and the need for preserving confidentiality and maintaining trust in the Office. Sensitive or private information must be protected from potential loss or inappropriate access in order to avoid potential litigation, damaged reputation and further reluctance in coming forward.	The Office has ongoing practices aimed at ensuring the security of information, which include security briefings and confidentiality agreements, random information security checks within the premises, and controlled access for the storage of sensitive information.	Disclosure and Reprisal Management Program	A transparent, accountable and responsive federal government

Maintaining HR capacity: There is a risk that PSIC may not be able to attract and retain the right people with the appropriate mix of skills to deliver on its mandate.	Continue to explore different exchange opportunities with other federal departments/agencies with similar investigative functions. Review performance and provide feedback to the HR service provider	Disclosure and Reprisal Management Program	A transparent, accountable and responsive federal government

Planned results: what we want to achieve this year and beyond

Programs

Disclosure and Reprisal Management Program

Description

The objective of the program is to address disclosures of wrongdoing and complaints of reprisal and increase confidence in federal public institutions. It aims to provide advice to federal public sector employees and members of the public who are considering making a disclosure and to accept, investigate and report on disclosures of information concerning possible wrongdoing. Based on this activity, the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner will exercise exclusive jurisdiction over the review, conciliation and settlement of complaints of reprisal, including making applications to the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal which determines whether reprisals have taken place and orders appropriate remedial and disciplinary action.

Planning highlights

In January 2017, employees were engaged in updating the Office's three year strategic plan, which contributed to establishing the priorities and plans. The 2017-18 planned initiatives were further refined and include the following:

- Improve timeliness for managing of cases;
- Further develop and implement operational policy instruments, tools and procedures to support decision-making and communications;
- Participate actively in the legislative review of the Act; and
- Seek new opportunities to raise awareness;
- Further develop strong relationships with key stakeholders;
- Enhance suite of tools and communication products to facilitate access and use of our services;
- Support and invest in management excellence;
- Attract and retain employees with the appropriate skills, and support their development through training and career development; and
- Foster a healthy, supportive and inclusive work environment that supports employee engagement.

These initiatives will continue to build on lessons learned over the past year. For example, we found that writing specific policies regarding what might be grey zones in the Act is a best practice that provides further understanding of the Act and how the Office interprets the Act. This resulted in designing expedited processes and has made our processes more timely, efficient, consistent and transparent. We also found that our participation at public sector conferences as exhibitors remains a valid and valuable outreach tool. In fact, there seems to be a growing awareness of the Office by public servants.

Last year, the Office carried out a holistic review of the intake and investigative processes using the LEAN methodology. This experimental approach entailed mapping and evaluating each process steps based on various factors such as relevancy, validity, value added, compatibility, flow and timeliness. As a result of this review, the Office has addressed its backlog, created a strategy to prevent a reoccurrence, and developed team approaches to previously linear steps. More importantly, it has generated inspiration and rejuvenated the spirit of innovation in team members. The Office will be moving forward with Phase II in 207-18 in order to find more efficiency and cultivate further innovation within its investigative processes.

In terms of previous results, because we are a micro organization, staffing and retention has been an issue. In 2015-16, two actual results were below targets mostly due to unanticipated employee departures. With the lessons learned from previous years and the new initiatives, we expect to achieve all targets in 2017-18.

Planned results

Expected results	Performance indicators	Target	Date to achieve target	2013–14 Actual results	2014–15 Actual results	2015–16 Actual results
An efficient, timely and transparent management of disclosures and reprisal complaints	Decision whether to investigate a complaint of reprisal is made within 15 days	100%	March 2018	90%	100%	100%
	General inquiries are responded to within one working day	80%	March 2018	Not available*	99%	90%
	Decision whether to investigate a disclosure of wrongdoing is made within 90 days	80%	March 2018	85%	84%	33%
	Investigations are completed within one year	80%	March 2018	Not available*	86%	50%
	Percentage of follow-ups on all recommendations made in case reports to public sector organizations	100%	March 2018	Not available*	Not available*	Not available*
To be known and accessible to public servants and members of the public	Number of communication products and items shared through various means	10,000	March 2018	Not available*	Not available*	Not available*
	Online form adopted by users versus other means	30% adoption rate	March 2018	Not available*	Not available*	Not available*
A skilled and adaptable team capable of responding to evolving needs	Percentage of employees out of total departmental staff	96%	March 2018	Not available*	Not available*	Not available*
	Percentage of employees who have a) completed a training plan and b) taken training	(a) 100% (b) 80%	March 2018	Not available*	Not available*	Not available*

* Service standards started to be measured in 2014-15.

Budgetary financial resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned spending	2018–19 Planned spending	2019–20 Planned spending
3,550,898	3,550,898	3,553,133	3,553,133

Human resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
23	23	23

Information on the Office's program is available on the Office's website[i] and in the TBS InfoBase.[ii]

Internal Services

Description

Internal Services are those groups of related activities and resources that the federal government considers to be services in support of programs and/or required to meet corporate obligations of an organization. Internal Services refers to the activities and resources of the 10 distinct service categories that support Program delivery in the organization, regardless of the Internal Services delivery model in a department. The 10 service categories are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; and Acquisition Services.

Planning highlights

Budgetary financial resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned spending	2018–19 Planned spending	2019–20 Planned spending
1,890,483	1,890,483	1,889,169	1,889,169

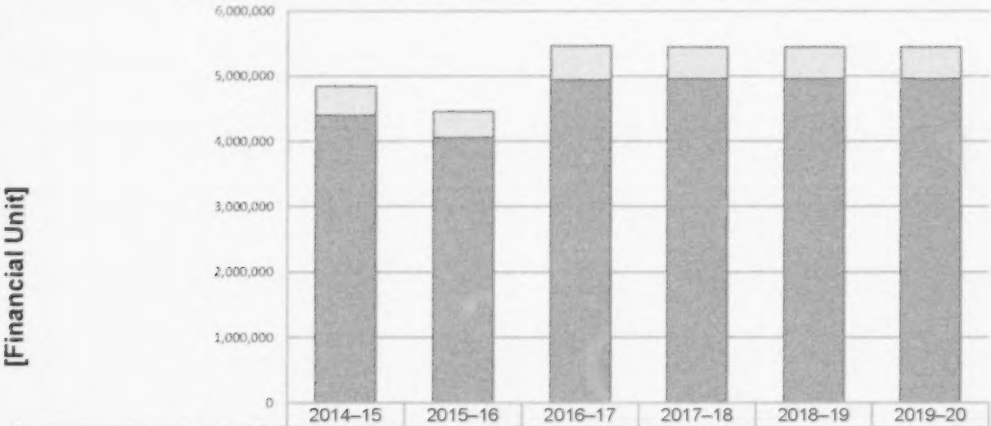
Human resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
7	7	7

Spending and human resources

Planned spending

Departmental spending trend graph



	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Sunset Programs – Anticipated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory	447,069	398,273	526,053	483,539	484,460	484,460
Voted	4,393,958	4,055,287	4,936,421	4,957,842	4,957,842	4,957,842
Total	4,841,027	4,453,560	5,462,474	5,441,381	5,442,302	5,442,302

Budgetary planning summary for Programs and Internal Services (dollars)

Programs and Internal Services	2014–15 Expenditures	2015–16 Expenditures	2016–17 Forecast spending	2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned spending	2018–19 Planned spending	2019–20 Planned spending
Disclosure and Reprisal Management	2,692,847	2,644,499	3,564,227	3,550,898	3,550,898	3,553,133	3,553,133
Subtotal	**2,692,847**	**2,644,499**	**3,564,227**	**3,550,898**	**3,550,898**	**3,553,133**	**3,553,133**
Internal Services	2,148,180	1,809,061	1,898,247	1,890,483	1,890,483	1,889,169	1,889,169
Total	**4,841,027**	**4,453,560**	**5,462,474**	**5,441,381**	**5,441,381**	**5,442,302**	**5,442,302**

The Office's annual actual spending decreased over the last two years as a result of vacant positions and reduced project spending. The 2016-17 forecast spending will also reflect a lower level of expenditures as we experienced delays in projects and are continuing the planning stages for the next three years. The planned spending in 2017-18 reflects a return to earlier levels of spending as the new program and internal services initiatives are being developed and implemented.

Planned human resources

Human resources planning summary for Programs and Internal Services (full-time equivalents)

Programs and Internal Services	2014–15 Full-time equivalents	2015–16 Full-time equivalents	2016–17 Forecast full-time equivalents	2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
Disclosure and Management Program	18	19	23	23	23	23
Subtotal	**18**	**19**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**
Internal Services	8	7	7	7	7	7
Total	**26**	**26**	**30**	**30**	**30**	**30**

The Office's actual full-time equivalents (FTEs) remained stable over the last two years. Over the 2016-17 fiscal year, some employees departed but the Office was able to quickly recruit new determinate and indeterminate employees. The planned FTEs in 2017-18 and future reflects an increase in staffing, returning to the earlier number of filled positions.

Estimates by vote

For information on the Office's organizational appropriations, consult the 2017–18 Main Estimates.[iii]

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations

The Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations provides a general overview of the Office's operations. The forecast of financial information on expenses and revenues is prepared on an accrual accounting basis to strengthen accountability and to improve transparency and financial management.

Because the Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations is prepared on an accrual accounting basis, and the forecast and planned spending amounts presented in other sections of the Departmental Plan are prepared on an expenditure basis, amounts may differ.

A more detailed Future-Oriented Statement of Operations and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations to the requested authorities, are available on the Office's website.[iv]

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations for the year ended March 31, 2018 (dollars)

Financial information	2016–17 Forecast results	2017–18 Planned results	Difference (2017–18 Planned results minus 2016–17 Forecast results)
Total expenses	5,462,474	5,441,381	(21, 093)
Total revenues	0	0	0
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	5,462,474	5,441,381	(21, 093)

The difference of $21,093, between both fiscal years reflects stability in our planned activities.

Supplementary information

Corporate information

Organizational profile

Appropriate minister(s): The Honourable Scott Brison, President of the Treasury Board

Institutional head: Joe Friday, Public Sector Integrity Commissioner

Ministerial portfolio: Treasury Board Secretariat

Enabling instrument(s): *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*, S.C. 2005, c. 46[v]

Year of incorporation / commencement: 2007

Other: The Office supports the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner, who is an independent Agent of Parliament.

Reporting framework

The Office's Strategic Outcome and Program Alignment Architecture (PAA) of record for 2017–18 are shown below:

1. Strategic Outcome: Disclosures of wrongdoing and complaints of reprisal are dealt with effectively, in a fair and timely manner.

1.1 Program: Disclosure and Reprisal Management Program
Internal Services

Supplementary information tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on the Office's website.[vi]

- Disclosure of transfer payment programs under $5 million
- Upcoming evaluations over the next five fiscal years
- Upcoming internal audits for the coming fiscal year

Federal tax expenditures

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures each year in the Report on Federal Tax Expenditures.[vii] This report also provides detailed background information on tax expenditures, including descriptions, objectives, historical information and references to related federal spending programs. The tax measures presented in this report are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Organizational contact information

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Appendix A: definitions

appropriation (crédit)

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

Core Responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a Core Responsibility are reflected in one or more related Departmental Results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan (Plan ministériel)

Provides information on the plans and expected performance of appropriated departments over a three-year period. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament each spring.

Departmental Result (résultat ministériel)

A Departmental Result represents the change or changes that the department seeks to influence. A Departmental Result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

Departmental Result Indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)

A factor or variable that provides a valid and reliable means to measure or describe progress on a Departmental Result.

Departmental Results Framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)

Consists of the department's Core Responsibilities, Departmental Results and Departmental Result Indicators.

Departmental Results Report (Rapport sur les résultats ministériels)

Provides information on the actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Departmental Plan.

full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)

For the purpose of the 2017–18 Departmental Plan, government-wide priorities refers to those high-level themes outlining the government's agenda in the 2015 Speech from the Throne, namely: Growth for the Middle Class; Open and Transparent Government; A Clean Environment and a Strong Economy; Diversity is Canada's Strength; and Security and Opportunity.

horizontal initiatives (initiative horizontale)

A horizontal initiative is one in which two or more federal organizations, through an approved funding agreement, work toward achieving clearly defined shared outcomes, and which has been designated (e.g. by Cabinet, a central agency, etc.) as a horizontal initiative for managing and reporting purposes.

Management, Resources and Results Structure (Structure de la gestion, des ressources et des résultats)

A comprehensive framework that consists of an organization's inventory of programs, resources, results, performance indicators and governance information. Programs and results are depicted in their hierarchical relationship to each other and to the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute. The Management, Resources and Results Structure is developed from the Program Alignment Architecture.

non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance (rendement)

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

Performance indicator (indicateur de rendement)

A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

Performance reporting (production de rapports sur le rendement)

The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

planned spending (dépenses prévues)

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts that receive Treasury Board approval by February 1. Therefore, planned spending may include amounts incremental to planned expenditures presented in the Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

plans (plan)

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

Priorities (priorité)

Plans or projects that an organization has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired Strategic Outcome(s).

program (programme)

A group of related resource inputs and activities that are managed to meet specific needs and to achieve intended results and that are treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Alignment Architecture (architecture d'alignement des programmes)

A structured inventory of an organization's programs depicting the hierarchical relationship between programs and the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute.

results (résultat)

An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

Strategic Outcome (résultat stratégique)

A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that is linked to the organization's mandate, vision and core functions.

sunset program (programme temporisé)

A time-limited program that does not have an ongoing funding and policy authority. When the program is set to expire, a decision must be made whether to continue the program. In the case of a renewal, the decision specifies the scope, funding level and duration.

target (cible)

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures (dépenses votées)

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The Vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

Endnotes

i. Office's Website, https://www.psic-ispc.gc.ca
ii. TBS InfoBase, https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start
iii. 2017–18 Main Estimates, http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hgw-cgf/finances/pgs-pdg/gepme-pdgbpd/index-eng.asp
iv. Office's Website, https://www.psic-ispc.gc.ca
v Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-31.9/
vi Office's Website, https://www.psic-ispc.gc.ca
vii. Report on Federal Tax Expenditures, http://www.fin.gc.ca/purl/taxexp-eng.asp